

USPTO Customer No. 25280

Case No. 5635

Amendments to the Claims

1. (Currently Amended) A non-tufted, knitted fabric made by employing continuous filament non-textured polyester yarn or fibers, said fabric being made by the process of:

- (a) providing a continuous filament non-textured polyester yarn;
- (b) heating and drawing simultaneously said polyester yarn to pre-stress the polyester yarn; providing a base portion, and
- (c) knitting the pre-stressed polyester yarn together in a single fabric forming operation, thereby, thereby forming providing a pile portion extending from a the base portion,
- (d) wherein said pile portion projects from said base portion, said pile portion comprising a plurality of tufts, at least some of said tufts consisting of groups of continuous filament non-textured polyester fibers, said fibers comprising a partially oriented thermoplastic polyester polymer, said tufts being arranged upon said base portion in rows,
- (e) heating said tufts with the non-textured polyester fibers to a temperature above the glass transition temperature of the polyester fibers, thereby laterally blooming the tufts, thereby forming in a single fabric forming operation a non-tufted knitted fabric with improved surface pile.

;

(e) wherein said laterally bloomed tufts provide a degree of surface coverage after the heating step (d) upon said base portion such that said rows when viewed from

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~~an edge perspective provide an average void area between each respective row of less than about 0.41 square millimeters at a fabric gauge of about 32 tufts per inch.~~

2. (Original) The fabric of claim 1, wherein said fibers are characterized by substantially uniform cross-sectional geometry along their length.
3. (Original) The fabric of claim 2, wherein said fiber cross-sectional aspect ratio is about 1.
4. (Original) The fabric of claim 1, wherein said fiber cross-sectional aspect ratio is greater than 1.
5. (Original) The fabric of claim 1, wherein the average amount of said average void area observed between said respective rows is equal to or less than about 0.35 square millimeters.
6. (Canceled)
7. (Original) The fabric of claim 1, wherein said fibers are heated and drawn simultaneously, said heating/drawing time being no greater than about 0.063 seconds.
8. (Original) The fabric of claim 1, wherein said fibers are heated and drawn simultaneously, said heating/drawing time being no greater than about 0.056 seconds.

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9. (Original) The fabric of claim 1, wherein said fibers are heated and drawn simultaneously, said heating/drawing time being no greater than about 0.052 seconds.

10. (Original) The fabric of claim 1, wherein said fibers are heated and drawn simultaneously, said heating/drawing time being no greater than about 0.047 seconds.

11. (Original) The fabric of claim 1 wherein the average void area between rows is between about 0.21 and about 0.41 square millimeters.

12. (Original) The fabric of claim 1, wherein the average void area between rows is between about 0.21 and about 0.35 square millimeters.

13. (Original) The fabric of claim 1, wherein said fibers consist essentially of partially oriented polyester.

14. (Original) The invention as recited in claim 13, wherein said fibers of said fabric are heat shocked during drawing of said fibers at a temperature of greater than about 200 degrees Centigrade.

15-33. (Canceled)

34. (New) The fabric of claim 1 wherein the fabric is formed in a sandwich structure on a double needle bar warp knitting machine.

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35. (New) The fabric of claim 34, wherein the fabric is formed at a six bar construction with ground yarns carried in bars 1, 2, 5 and 6.